

Today, our Nation is at an inflection point that will determine our future for decades to come. But because of the investments that we have made, the United States of America is better positioned to lead than any Nation on Earth. The Budget reflects our values as a Nation—a Nation of good people, growing in a new age of possibilities, and standing as a beacon to the world. Together, let us put those values into practice and prove that democracy delivers as we keep building a stronger, fairer economy that leaves no one behind.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2023.

□ 1845

WATER STORAGE IS KEY TO CALIFORNIA'S ABILITY TO WEATHER DROUGHTS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, recently the California Department of Water Resources announced that water deliveries throughout the State Water Project would be increased to 75 percent of requested amounts. Also, the Bureau of Reclamation made a similar announcement on 100 percent in certain districts in northern California.

The State levels have increased from an announced 35 percent earlier on. These increases are possible due to the massive amount of rain and snowpack California has received from a series of winter storms.

Many of our State's reservoirs, once teetering on the brink of being empty, are rapidly filling. While these increased water allocations are good news, there is still a pressing need for more water storage in California.

Sites Reservoir in my district, a project that should already have been built, would already have 1½ million acre-feet of water in it. Raising Shasta Dam farther north only 18 feet would result in 630,000 more acre-feet. One acre-foot of water, for example, is enough to sustain two California families for a whole year.

Improving the flood controls and modernizing some of our water infrastructure would allow us to keep more stormwater. Storage is key for California's ability to weather droughts for more than 1 year. Store the water we get in the winter and we will have it when we need it in the summer.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VALERIE "VAL" MCCAIN

(Mr. NEWHOUSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor and remember the life of a dear friend and an inspiration to central Washington communities, Valerie

"Val" McCain, who unexpectedly passed away this past Sunday.

Val was an incredible leader with over 30 years of industry experience across several continents. At the time of her death, she served as the project director of the Hanford Tank Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant and as senior vice president of Bechtel.

Val was an inspiration to workers across the Hanford site and in the Tri-Cities communities. She also served our local and government communities on boards of the Energy Facility Contractors Group, TRIDEC, The STEM Foundation, and Columbia Industries.

Val's death is a loss for our community, but her leadership and contributions to central Washington will never be forgotten. We should all strive to emulate her engagement and selfless citizenship.

May she rest in peace.

CONGRATULATING COACH BRANDON JERNIGAN

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Brandon Jernigan, the athletic director at Pierce County High School.

Brandon has been named the Georgia High School Association's Region 2A athletic director of the year. He has been a coach for 24 years and has spent the last 15 years at Pierce County High School. For the last 6 years, he has served as Pierce County High School's athletic director.

During his time as athletic director, Pierce County has achieved many notable athletic accomplishments, including the school's first State football championship. He has also overlooked large expansion projects for the football, baseball, and softball fields.

Brandon is much more than just an athletic director. He is a pillar of his community and someone who has made a lasting impact on everyone around him. His impact on our young men and women will be felt for generations to come.

Congratulations on this wonderful accomplishment.

FIGHTING TO REESTABLISH ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, throughout the month of March, the Western Caucus has been highlighting the need for permitting reform in almost every aspect of the Federal Government.

Permitting and regulatory reform have long been a priority for the Western Caucus and it has become even more important in recent months.

As our Nation fights to reestablish energy independence, we need certainty for American energy producers and a reliable process for increased critical mineral mining.

As catastrophic wildfires threaten the West year after year, we need permitting processes that empower State and local land managers to effectively manage our forests and our grasslands.

As rural communities are faced with more and more Federal overreach from the Biden administration, they deserve certainty and transparency. That is why we must reform our broken permitting processes to unlock American investment and unleash the potential of rural America.

Landmark environmental protection laws like NEPA and the ESA have truly gotten out of control. While well intentioned they are, they are now used by serial litigants to stall critical infrastructure and management projects.

These far-left environmental groups use these statutes to drive political wedges and ensure America is dependent on her adversaries. Endless cycles of litigation tie the hands of project developers, of land managers, and of private conservationists, all while posing a serious threat to both our local economies as well as our environment.

As a farmer from the central part of the State of Washington and as chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus, I see how regulations from the Federal Government have disproportionately negatively impacted our rural communities. This is unfair for so many reasons, but the main one being that these are exactly the men and women that we should be empowering.

In rural America, our livelihoods depend on a healthy environment and on our natural resources. We truly have a vested interest in and a storied history of protecting our lands and our waters. We just need the Federal Government to literally get out of our way.

That is why House Republicans have introduced H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, to deliver on our promise to unleash American energy and lower prices for all consumers, regardless of what industry they are engaged in.

H.R. 1 updates our broken permitting process to actually let Americans mine, let Americans farm, let Americans manufacture, to process, and to build so that our country can grow and thrive once more.

Today, I am joined by Western Caucus members from across our country who will shed light on how broke permitting processes throughout the Federal Government have kneecapped

rural communities and how H.R. 1 can help resolve many of these challenges.

In order to truly unleash American potential, we must reform our permitting processes and we will continue to advocate for commonsense policies that will do just that.

As the preeminent voice for rural America on Capitol Hill, we have an expansive membership who have been on the front lines of the crafting of H.R. 1, our top legislative priority. We will continue to highlight the need for permitting reform to get more energy projects online and lower the cost to battle the inflation caused by the Biden administration's reckless agenda. This evening, many of our members of the Western Caucus will be here participating.

I ask the Speaker's indulgence that Mr. STAUBER from Minnesota actually manage the time for our Special Order tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

URGENT NEED FOR PERMITTING REFORM TO SECURE AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the urgent need for permitting reform to secure America's energy future.

H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, will modernize our outdated permitting process for projects and allow us to unlock the full potential of America's energy and mineral resources.

I want to discuss the mining provisions of H.R. 1, which includes my Permitting for Mining Needs Act. The district that I represent in northern Minnesota, Minnesota's Eighth Congressional District, has 95 percent of America's nickel reserve, almost 90 percent of America's cobalt reserve, 75 percent of our platinum group metals, and more than a third of our copper—all of which are minerals needed for our energy security and mineral supply chains.

It is unconscionable that a mining project in my district for these minerals is on year 20 of permitting and litigation.

We have the resources and the workforce here in the United States, we just need the will, the political will, to mine here. Whether it be mining oil and gas, wind or solar energy, we support all of the above and all of the best energy, but you can't have all of the above and all of the best without permitting reform.

We also need permitting reform to build transmission lines, roads, bridges, and more. Take Dairyland Power's Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line project in Wisconsin, for example. This 103-mile-long project is

designed to put more wind power on the grid, but is currently locked in year 7 of permitting because just 1.3 miles of it is unlucky enough to touch Federal land.

This is simply unacceptable, and we can and must do better. If we want to establish American mineral independence and dominance and end our current reliance on the Chinese Communist Party, we must pass H.R. 1.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. MILLER).

□ 1900

Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of H.R. 1.

H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, is about increasing domestic production, permitting reform, reversing President Biden's anti-energy agenda, and streamlining energy exports.

To be perfectly frank, the Biden administration has been putting out anti-energy policies since his first week in office. He shut down the Keystone pipeline and halted permits for domestic energy production that we desperately needed.

He drained our Strategic Petroleum Reserve to try to stop the pain from his terrible policies instead of coming up with real solutions.

Just last night, he tweeted that electric cars are the future.

I have never seen an administration so out of touch with the American people, which is exactly why these same people affected by anti-energy policies elected a Republican majority in the House of Representatives.

In the majority, our first priority is to bring down energy costs and increase energy production. The Lower Energy Costs Act is just the first of many crucial energy policies I am looking forward to seeing over the next 2 years.

One of the pieces of legislation that I am looking forward to seeing is the completion of the Mountain Valley pipeline. The Mountain Valley pipeline is a great example of why permitting works and exactly why we need more of it.

In this project's case, the administration isn't the problem. It is the left-wing courts—which are more radical than Joe Biden, which should really tell you something—that are holding up this important pipeline.

When the pipeline is completed, it will be delivering natural gas within months, meaning lower energy prices for Americans as supply will dramatically increase.

There is no time to waste. Remember that energy security is national security.

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for those comments. She is spot on.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), the executive vice chair of the Western Caucus.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for hosting tonight and for his great work on mining in this country that we need so desperately, especially with some of the ideas that are being pushed forward in the name of climate change.

I appreciate Chairman NEWHOUSE, as well, for organizing this.

What do we know about H.R. 1, the bill that was discussed here all afternoon, known as the Lower Energy Costs Act? It will reform the permitting process across industries, cut down on needless red tape, and help drive down energy costs for Americans.

We heard all afternoon, though, that it is going to be a handout to oil and gas companies—no, it is not; it is going to strip away environmental laws—no, it is not; it will give companies free rein to poison rivers and streams—yes, that is really what we are about here—no, it doesn't do that either.

It is a monumental win for any American who wants to produce energy, use energy, have their costs lowered, have a secure energy supply long term instead of importing it from OPEC, China, or Russia.

The legislation we are talking about, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, these were signed in the early 1970s by a Republican, Richard Nixon. Republicans know how to do things ecologically soundly, as well. You wouldn't know it from the other side of the aisle, or even the press, but, yes, we are interested in doing things correctly.

Also, there is the reality that people need things. People need energy. People need to stay warm. We need to produce crops in this country instead of importing everything and exporting environmental problems, if they are that, to other countries that do things much dirtier than we ever thought about doing—to the Pacific Rim, China, where have you.

Our natural gas that we produce in this country is extracted during a cleaner process that is even cleaner fuel than what comes out of Russia. That is why it is good if we were partners with Western Europe, exporting natural gas to them instead of them getting it from a pipeline from the Russian bear.

Despite this critical need for an increase in energy supply—the need for the world is going to continue to go up. You may have seen the chart earlier we were using where it keeps going higher and higher. Oil and gas in the rest of the world are going to be part of that.

They are trying to clamp it down in this country. We are the only ones that are going to be economically disadvantaged, compared to other countries around the world, by doing so.

They yell at us about NEPA being untouchable and what we are talking about in H.R. 1 being a heyday for polluters. It is not that at all.

What it does point out is it takes more than a decade to permit a mine, more than a decade to get a new mine